GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:292
ANSWERED ON:18.07.2017
Production Cost of Agricultural Produce
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the commercialisation of agriculture involves the maximum use of pesticides and fertilizers and excessive use of groundwater which has resulted in indebtedness of Indian farmers and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the neglect of livestocks and rising cost of fodder have forced the Indian farmers to rely on tractors for agriculture;

(c) if so, whether the reliance on tractors has further aggravated the problem of negligence of livestocks and the production of organic fertilizer has almost dipped, if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the agriculture yield has also decreased and the input costs increased due to overuse of chemical fertilizers resulting in the dominance of foreign multinational companies in Indian agriculture through foreign seeds and pesticides; and

(e) if so, the schemes formulated by the Government to minimise input costs and to end the dominance of multinational companies in Indian agriculture?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a): There is no specific study available with the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW) and Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) which solely attributes maximum use of pesticides and excessive use of groundwater to indebtedness of Indian farmers. However, as per Economic Survey 2015-16, India's pesticides usage is 0.5 kg per hectare, which is low as compared to other countries, such as, 7.0 kg per hectare in the USA, 2.5 kg per hectare in Europe, 12 kg per hectare in Japan and 6.6 kg per hectare in Korea. In addition, as per the Ground Water Resources estimation jointly carried by CGWB and State Govt. (as on 2013), there is decline in long term trend of ground water level.

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(b) & (c): There is no specific study available with the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW) which can relate the neglect of livestock and rising cost of rising cost of fodder have forced the Indian farmers to rely on tractors for agriculture. However, as per the data available, the population of draft animals has been reduced from 80.4 million during 1960-61 to 47.7 million during 2014-15.

There is more inclination towards the use of tractors and other farm machinery due to its versatility for various agricultural applications from seed bed preparation to harvesting of crop. Farm mechanization helps in efficient utilization of inputs to increase the productivity of land and labour. Besides it helps in reducing the drudgery in farm operations and also enabling the farmers to raise a second crop or multi crop making the Indian agriculture attractive and a way of life by becoming commercial instead of subsistence and make Agriculture more profitable and attractive profession for Rural youth. As per the study of ICAR, estimated contributions from farm mechanization is as below.

i. Savings in seeds: 15-20%;
ii. Savings in fertilizers: 15-20%;
iii. Increase in cropping intensity: 5-20%;
iv. Savings in time: 20-30%; and
v. Reduction in manual labour: 20-30%; and
vi. Overall increase in farm productivity 10-15 %

(d): The agriculture yield of the foodgrains in the last three years are as follows:

(Kg/hectare)
2014-15 2015-16 2016-17 (3rd Advance Estimate)

Total Foodgrains 2028 2042 2142

In addition, as per Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP), price policy reports for Kharif and Rabi 2017-18, the Composite Input Price Index (CIPI) has increased for the last three years.

(e): The Government is implementing "Strengthening and Modernization of Pest Management Approach in India" Scheme, wherein, Farmers Field Schools (FFSs) are being organized to sensitize farmers about Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach so as to reduce dependence on chemical pesticides and encourage use of bio-pesticides and other alternative plant protection measures. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing various schemes, wherein, financial assistance is provided to the farmers for procurement of inputs like machineries, bio-fertilizers, bio-pesticides, etc.

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